Comprehensive System of Student Assessment (CSSA)

Parent Guide To
Test Interpretation for the Alternate Assessment
For Reading, Writing, and Mathematics
Spring 2013

The Purpose of Testing

The purposes of statewide student assessment specifically are to: 1) help determine which children are meeting statewide performance standards; 2) produce statewide information to facilitate sound decision making by policy makers, parents, educators, and the public; and 3) provide a focus for instructional improvement [4 AAC 06.700]. The purpose of the Alternate Assessment (AA) is to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities have access to, participate in, and make progress in the general education curricula, as well as show what they know and can learn [4 AAC 06.775].

What the Alternate Assessment Measures

The Alternate Assessment measures what students know and can do at their grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics (and science) compared to the Alaska Extended Grade Level Expectations (ExGLEs) for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The Alaska Alternate Assessment is based on Extended Grade Level Expectations with the performance measured against alternate achievement standards which differ in complexity from grade level achievement standards. The Alternate Assessments are organized into grade bands: 3/4, 5/6, 7/8, and 9/10.

Components of the Alternate Assessment

The Alternate Assessment tests reading, writing, and mathematics (and science) as required by state and federal law. Statewide assessment of functional skills is not included in this academic assessment as the statewide assessment must measure the student's academic knowledge and skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The tasks included in this assessment are performance, curriculum-based measures and are aligned to the Extended Grade Level Expectations. The assessment permits the use of accommodations, assistive technology, and adaptations of the material in order to provide the best access of the content for each student.

Reading

The reading assessment is designed to measure essential reading skills. The tasks measure the degree to which students with significant cognitive disabilities are learning to read at the symbol, word, and text levels. The tasks increase in complexity with each grade band and include: identification of pictures, symbols, and letters in the alphabet, identification of own name,

distinguishing sounds, generating sounds of letters, reading simple words to more complex words, reading sentences, reading text, comprehending text, obtaining information, and identification of root words.

Writing
The writing assessment is designed to measure skill acquisition in written language development for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The tasks measure the degree to which students with significant cognitive disabilities are learning to write using letters, words, and connected sentences. The tasks increase in complexity with each grade and include the following: copy letters, copy words, copy sentences; write their name, write words from dictation, sentence mechanics, write a sentence, write a story, and revise writing.

Mathematics
The mathematics assessment is designed to measure the degree to which students with significant cognitive disabilities have developed numerical understanding. The tasks measure the degree to which students with significant cognitive disabilities are learning to use numbers and mathematical symbols as well as solve problems. The tasks increase in complexity with each grade and include: copying numbers, identifying numbers on a number line, counting, identifying same and different, identifying and matching shapes, reading and writing numbers, counting objects, single and double digit addition, subtraction, and multiplication, reproducing and extending simple patterns and identifying skip patterns, reading and creating simple graphs, identifying measurement, counting and identifying money, identifying perimeter, identifying fractions, labeling a set as none or zero, understanding symbols, identifying place value, ordering numbers, rounding numbers, and identifying lines of symmetry.

Reading the Individual Student Report
The Individual Student Report (ISR) provides a graphic and text display of student performance. An **unofficial student report** is generated when Qualified Assessors enter student test scores after completing the administration of the Alternate Assessment during the test window of late January – early April 2013. It is immediately available and is designed to provide instructional feedback. A separate student report is generated for reading, writing, and mathematics. The unofficial, online reports have a different appearance than the official. Scores are represented in percentage correct and no proficiency levels are assigned. After student information is verified for accuracy, scores are calculated, and proficiency levels assigned. An **official student report** is then uploaded to the DRA Reporting Website and and downloaded by the District Test Coordinator

Reading, Writing, and Mathematics Score Possible and Score Earned are scaled scores. Only valid scores are used for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). If the student takes Standard and ELOS items, only the standard data are displayed. No ELOS scores are graphed.

A	This section identifies the year for the report, and all student demographic information.
B	**Your Student's Overall Performance** indicates the student's score, what score is needed for proficiency according to the approved cut scores, and the student's proficiency levels for each subject area of reading, writing, and mathematics.
C	**Interpretation of Chart** explains how to read components of the chart such as proficiency levels, student skills performance, and expanded levels of support items.

D, F, H	The **Your Student's Performance by Standard** section describes the proficiency levels reported in section B for Reading, Writing, and Mathematics by separating the scores into strands, and displaying the total possible scores and the scores earned.
E, G, I	This is a graphical representation of the score needed to obtain levels of proficiency for reading (FB – Far Below, BP – Below Proficiency, P – Proficient, and A – Advanced) and indicates where the student's score falls on the proficiency graph. See Interpretation of Chart for explanation of the diamond shape.
J	Reverse side of page shows the Proficiency Level Descriptors and cut scores by proficiency level for this grade.

Alaska

Comprehensive System of Student Assessment (CSSA)

Parent Guide
To Test Interpretation for the Alternate Assessment
In Science
Spring 2013

The Purpose of Testing

The purposes of statewide student assessment specifically are to: 1) help determine which children are meeting statewide performance standards; 2) produce statewide information to facilitate sound decision making by policy makers, parents, educators, and the public; and 3) provide a focus for instructional improvement [4 AAC 06.700]. The purpose of the Alternate Assessment (AA) is to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities have access to, participate in, and make progress in the general education curricula, as well as show what they know and can learn [4 AAC 06.775].

What the Alternate Assessment in Science Measures

The Alternate Assessment measures what students know and can do at their grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics (and science) compared to the Alaska Extended Grade Level Expectations (ExGLEs) for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The Alaska Alternate Assessment is based on Extended Grade Level Expectations with the performance measured against alternate achievement standards which differ in complexity from grade level achievement standards. The Alternate Assessments in science are tested in grades 4, 8, and 10.

Components of the Alternate Assessment in Science

The Alternate Assessment tests reading, writing, and mathematics (and science) as required by state and federal law. Statewide assessment of functional skills is not included in this academic assessment as the statewide assessment must measure the student's academic knowledge and skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The tasks included in this assessment are performance, curriculum-based measures and are aligned to the Extended Grade Level Expectations. The assessment permits the use of accommodations, assistive technology, and adaptations of the material in order to provide the best access of the content for each student.

Science

The alternate assessment in science is comprised of three grade level assessments (grades 4, 8, and 10) designed to measure essential skills in science. The tasks are designed to measure the degree to which students with significant cognitive disabilities are learning to comprehend and

apply scientific knowledge. The tasks increase in complexity with each grade and include: concepts of physical science, concepts of life science, concepts of earth science, the history and nature of science, and science and technology. Individual grade assessments are comprised of the following: grade 4 contains 4 tasks addressing 5 content standards; grade 8 contains 4 tasks addressing 4 content standards; and grade 10 contains 4 tasks addressing 4 content standards.

Reading the Individual Student Report

The Individual Student Report (ISR) provides a graphic and text display of student performance. An **unofficial student report** is generated when Qualified Assessors enter student test scores after completing the administration of the Alternate Assessment during the testing window of late January – early April 2013. It is immediately available and is designed to provide instructional feedback. A separate student report is generated for reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The unofficial, online reports have a different appearance from the official reports and no proficiency levels are assigned. Scores are represented in percentage correct. After student information is verified for accuracy, scores are calculated and proficiency levels assigned. An **official student report** is then uploaded to the DRA Reporting Website and downloaded by the District Test Coordinator.

Science Score Possible and Score Earned columns display raw scores. Only valid scores are used for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Scores for the Expanded Levels of Support (ELOS) items are designated as Far Below Proficient, and ELOS scores are not graphically displayed. If the student takes both Standard and ELOS items, only the standard data are displayed.

A	This section identifies the year for the report and all student demographic information.
B	**Your Student's Overall Performance** indicates the student's score, what score is needed for proficiency according to the approved cut scores, and the student's proficiency levels for the subject area of science.
C	**Interpretation of Chart** explains how to read components of the chart such as proficiency levels, student skills performance, and expanded levels of support.
D	**Your Students Performance by Standard** describes the proficiency level reported in B separated into strands, giving the total possible score and the score earned.
E	A graphical representation provides the score needed to obtain levels of proficiency for reading (FB – Far Below, BP – Below Proficiency, P – Proficient, and A – Advanced) and indicates where the student's score falls on the proficiency graph.
F	Reverse side of page shows the Proficiency Level Descriptors and cut scores by proficiency level for this grade.